

MUCUS SHAVING APPARATUS FOR ENDOTRACHEAL TUBES

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0029] An endotracheal tube cleaning apparatus 10 which can be periodically inserted into the inside of an endotracheal tube 30 to shave away mucus deposits. In a preferred embodiment, this cleaning apparatus 10 comprises a flexible central tube 12 with an inflatable balloon 40 at its distal end. Affixed to the inflatable balloon are one or more shaving rings 70, each having a squared leading edge 72 to shave away mucus accumulations 60. In operation, the uninflated cleaning apparatus 10 of the present invention is inserted into the endotracheal tube until its distal end is properly aligned with or slightly beyond the distal end of the endotracheal tube. After proper alignment, the balloon 40 is inflated by a suitable inflation device, such as a syringe 14, until the balloon's shaving rings are pressed against the inside surface of the endotracheal tube. The cleaning apparatus is then pulled out of the endotracheal tube and, in the process, the balloon's shaving rings shave off the mucus deposits from the inside of the endotracheal tube.

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